

From a colored soldier to F. J. Garrison.

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James Island, So. Ca.

Dear Sir

April 1st 1865

this is to inform you that I have not forgotten to write you as I promised, I arrived at Hilton Head on the 24th Dec., we experienced a terrible gale the whole route. On the second day we had to cut loose a schooner which the "Arago" had in tow laden with arms. in ten minutes she was out of sight, I have never learned what was her fate. it was supposed by all on Board the "Arago" that she went down, we had about four hundred passengers on board. Many of them were never at sea before. Those aboard that happened to be old "salts" were greatly amused, and sickened at the sight of these greenlees, On the 25th I got transportation to Fittsfinny, from there to Boyds Landing where I joined my Regt, two days after my arrival I went on duty. Nothing occurred of importance

Till about the middle of January, when we were
ordered to Salt Lake. from there to Sacramento ^{by a} up
(But they never got there) landed at Fort Thunder
about several miles from S. here we found
quite a large force belonging to Genl Sherman's
Army. we found them to be a hard set
of fellows. Many of them had never seen
a "black" man in Uncle Sam's (don't mean
the devil) Regt, but few of them had heard
of the 55th Mass Vol's, and that few, (except
a Mass. Regt, belonging to Sherman's Army) did
not know the status of the 55th Mass Vol, of
course they heaped any amount of oaths and
insults at us. fortunately we had camped
near them, and after seeing one of our
Parades, Drill, and Guard Mounting, they
"Caved" and concluded we were soldiers.
they began to visit our camp, assumed ^{friendship} ~~and~~ we
and began to trade with some of our men.
the third day we were removed to Fort
Bartow about the time we got up comfortable
quarters we were ordered away, where two

No one seemed to know, but we brought
up at Hilton Head, (here we heard of the down
fall of Charleston) from the Head we went to
old Folly Island, from there, via Coles Island
to James Island, where we encountered the rebels
about three O'clk P.M., Our skirmish line
advanced till the enemy could stand it no
longer, they opened on us, and as quickly left
the field to us, the 55th was on the reserve
and was ordered to make the charge, and
gallantly they charged but we did not reach
the works, there was no need of it the Rebels
had retired in disgrace, and I think
in disgust, After dark we retired to Coles
Island, Next A.M., went over to Folly Island
that night, we embarked on the Steamer Cosmopolis-
tan, and headed for South Edisto here
we remained two days, hunting, without any
success for the enemy, we then went to North
Edisto, here we were attended with the same
success, On another boat we went and
put out for Bulls Bay here we remained

ten days aboard the transport, As new boat
But a very poor one, we landed on the
Eleventh day on an Island, the name of which
I never learned, next day we started for
Mount Pleasant, But this time using our own
propellers, we marched all day, till dark
Encamped, in the a.m., we were off
again and reached Mount Pleasant about
M., remained there till Feb 21st & embarked
on the same old 'Leonides' and was landed
at the Charleston Dock about Sun down
Such enthusiasm as were then, and there,
manifested I never witnessed in my life
before, we halted about an hour,
during that halt, many funny scenes we
enacted by the poor souls, just set free,
they jumped, shouted, howled, danced,
sang, swore, and prayed, apparently at
the same time and in one breath, 'twas then
that Mr Redpath came to your Brothers
side, he looked well, but did not
recognize me, 'twas dark, 'twas well he
did not, or I might not have heard the
expressions of joy and gladness he uttered
But I must close, More anon, please give
my regards to your dear father and mother
not forgetting to reserve a large share for yourself
Mr. Carison is enjoying good health, and looks
well,
Respectfully yours
Peter H. Laws, 1st Sergt
Co "F" 55th Mass Vol, Charleston
S. C.

Serg't Peter S. Laws,
Co. D, 55th Mass,
James D's,
April 1, 1865,
Care of

Wm Lloyd Garrison Esq
Mass.

Master Frank Garrison
221 Washington St
Boston



